

People Biz, Inc.

WORK-LIFE BALANCE - MAYBE YOU CAN'T DO BALANCE?

Everyone wants balance. Is there such a thing? Clients hire me as a coach for this reason just as often as the clients who want more time and money.

In order to get some power and facility with this concept, let's shift how we think about balance. We tend to think of balance in terms of equal time to equal areas in our lives. In our minds, we relate to balance this way even though we know it isn't possible to spend equal time to equal areas in our lives. Especially, when our work (for most of us) takes up more than half of our waking hours each day.

Let's use a metaphor. Imagine that achieving balance is like being a great juggler. The balls you juggle represent areas of your life. What makes a great juggler is not that they are great at keeping the balls in the air at all times. What makes a great juggler is that they are great at getting the ball that has fallen, back in the air with relative ease and speed.

See if you recognize what type of juggler you are with these examples:

- Do you ignore the balls, eventually tripping over them?
- Do you spend a great deal of time and energy analyzing the balls on the ground as if understanding their state will help pick them up?
- Do you stay upset because balls keep dropping, making the balls harder to keep up or pick up?
- Do you create formulas and go to training for keeping the balls in the air, until confronted with the fact that balls drop, that's what they do?

I have learned from my "wise" clients that balance is about noticing what is out and gracefully putting it back in. Balance is a dance with life. It has nothing to do with time or time management; rather it has everything to do with choosing what is important to you, choosing what is valuable to you and your level of attention to it.

Let's address each juggling tendency and how to remedy it (You could have more than one).

- If you ignore areas until a crisis of sorts occurs: Do an assessment of what actions, projects or practices would help. Start with easy items to check off your list first. For example if you ignore your financial well-being in general. Your list may look like: see a financial planner, finish tax return, and turn in rebate on computer just purchased. Then start with what you perceive is easiest. As we free up the energy used to procrastinate, we gain energy for the more difficult issues to address.
- If you tend to assess and analyze rather than be in action: Get an accountability partner (coach, partner, or mentor) who will help develop a plan and assist you to stay in action.

- If you feel overwhelmed and stressed from all there is to do, focus on extreme self-care to reduce anxiety and gain focus. For example: exercise, meditation, quiet time, and reading. You know what you need. Also focus on creating space in your life and business. Throw unneeded items out. Give away things, projects and tasks. Hire someone to do it. Let go of extracurricular activities unless it adds to your extreme self-care.
- If you tend to be scattered trying to do it all and end up doing none of it well, have a sit down with someone who knows you well and start committing to what matters most and eliminating what doesn't. Mastery is a function of choosing what is important to you and going deep into that area. Not everything deserves your attention, choose and eliminate.

Once again, what makes a great juggler is not that they are great at keeping the balls in the air at all times. What makes a great juggler is that they are great at getting the ball that has fallen, back in the air with relative ease and speed.

Is it time to pick up that ball?

"Just as your car runs more smoothly and requires less energy to go faster and farther when the wheels are in perfect alignment, you perform better when your thoughts, feelings, emotions, goals, and values are in balance." - Brian Tracy

About the Author

Alicia Marie, Founder and Managing Director of People Biz, Inc., has become a national leader in the field of leadership development. She founded People Biz, Inc. in 2000 with the intention of providing total personal and professional development solutions for individuals, teams and organizations. She specializes in creating customized programs based on desired outcomes that include learning vehicles such as training, professional coaching and consulting.

People Biz, Inc. is a leadership development organization that focuses on transformational leadership initiatives for individuals, teams and organizations. Their award winning leadership program "Leading Change" uses the fundamental principles of Transformational Leadership to not just talk about leadership but to develop powerful leaders.